

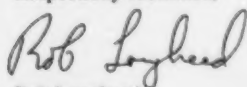
September 1, 2000

The Honourable Ralph Klein
Premier of Alberta
307 Legislature Building
Edmonton, Alberta
T5K 2B6

Dear Honourable Premier:

I have the honour to present the twelfth Annual Report of the Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities. This report covers the activities undertaken by your Council during the fiscal year ending March 31, 2000. It is submitted in accordance with the provision of s.7(1) of the Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities Act for your presentation to the Legislative Assembly.

Respectfully submitted,



Rob Loughheed
Chair, Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities
MLA, Clover Bar - Fort Saskatchewan

To Champion Significant
Improvement in the Status of
Albertans with Disabilities

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The year has been a challenging one as the Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities moved from the creation of its strategic Three-Year Business Plan to the execution of its new core businesses: policy development, advocacy, and evaluation. Through increased efforts to build dialogue with communities and through the translation of desired outcomes to our provincial departments, the Premier's Council has worked harder than ever before to maintain and increase its role as the conduit or bridge between these sometimes reserved partners.



With these challenges in mind, community and government stakeholders, along with past and present Council Members, have insisted that Council's priority be the development and implementation of an Alberta Disability Strategy. Development of the Alberta Disability Strategy—a process that will fully involve community stakeholders and the provincial government—is expected to be completed and approved by Cabinet prior to year end 2001. The Alberta Disability Strategy will:

- > endorse the values and principles of the disability community;
- > provide an overall umbrella policy for provincial departments and agencies; and,
- > address priority areas with specific commitments to "calls to action."

The drafting of a Federal Disability Strategy by Human Resources Development Canada and the commitments made by all federal/provincial/territorial governments towards a coordinated approach to disability issues create a unique opportunity to develop a successful Alberta Disability Strategy.

There are more than 500,000 persons with disabilities in Alberta. Many of these citizens have family members who, as caregivers, are directly impacted by disability. Disability either affects or will affect us all, in every aspect of our lives. With an aging population, we expect the challenges to increase—unless we begin to prepare.

More than 1000 organizations are committed to representing the ever-increasing number of citizens with disabilities in Alberta. Only a handful are dedicated to working for all persons with disabilities—and the Premier's Council is the only one with a legislated mandate to do so. Development of an Alberta Disability Strategy presents the best opportunity ever to speak with a common voice and move forward together. An Alberta Disability Strategy will give us a means by which we may address issues in a more efficient, coordinated fashion.

As an MLA, it is my responsibility to communicate the concerns and wishes of the constituents of Clover Bar-Fort Saskatchewan to the Legislative Assembly. As Chair of the Premier's Council, I do the same—except my accountability is expanded to 17% of our provincial population. It is a role that I take very seriously and with great respect. My fellow Council Members—many of whom have disabilities or have been impacted by a disability—and the employees of the Council's Secretariat share my view of the importance of the Council's work. Their hands-on, consumer-focused involvement in the ongoing advancement of an Alberta Disability Strategy is a testament to this. It is through their advice and direction that I am able to convey the barriers and challenges we face, as well as the opportunities we are currently presented with, to the Premier and my colleagues in the Alberta Legislature such that future changes may continue to be positive and ultimately result in full participation in our society by Albertans with disabilities.

Sincerely,

Rob Lougheed
MLA, Cloverbar - Fort Saskatchewan

In January 2000, I was asked by the Chair of the Council to take on the role of acting Executive Director in Elaine Chapelle's absence. The challenges of this position are demanding, and I am grateful to Council members and Secretariat staff for their support and hard work during the past few months. While Elaine's presence is greatly missed by Council and Secretariat, she has left us with a solid foundation upon which to build.

This past year has been a time of active involvement and evolution for the Premier's Council and Secretariat. As Council members moved in to the second year of their term, they became increasingly determined and focussed on championing significant improvements in the lives of Albertans with disabilities.

In April of 1999, Council and Secretariat participated in a Strategic Planning Workshop that resulted in the development of the Council's mission statement, business plan, vision, and strategic priorities. The next step was to hold Open Houses in six communities (Calgary, Bonnyville, Edmonton, Grande Prairie, High Level, and Medicine Hat), providing Council with an excellent opportunity to meet face-to-face with members of the disability community and gain valuable feedback on their perception of Council's visibility and effectiveness.

With the exception of the participants in Edmonton, few respondents rated the Council as significantly visible in their community or highly effective in supporting and promoting the concerns of the disability community. Despite this, the majority of respondents rated the Council's potential value as a partner on disability issues as relatively high. These results sent a clear message to the Council: meaningful involvement and significant action is needed.

We have heard the same message during our regular reviews of the visions, goals and aspirations of the many disability organizations in Alberta. We join with these organizations in the pursuit of full citizenship, implying full inclusion and participation in the social, economic and political life of Alberta communities.

Together we strive for increased understanding, a level playing field, support for basic safety and security needs and a standard of living and quality of life that promotes well being for all. We believe that, as citizens of Canada, Albertans with disabilities must have the same rights, freedoms and responsibilities as all other Canadians, and must be free to make choices and determine their own destinies.

With all this mind, and knowing that our government had joined other provinces in committing to the federal accord aimed at improving programs and services for people with disabilities, we moved from consultation into significant action—namely, development of an Alberta Disability Strategy to complement the development of the Federal Disability Strategy.

The development of an Alberta Disability Strategy comes at a particularly critical time in the lives of Albertans with disabilities. Government cutbacks and downsizing in the past decade have had significant impact on persons with disabilities in areas such as health, education, employment, housing, social services and transportation. It is our hope that our current efforts will result in increased opportunities for persons with disabilities in all of these areas.

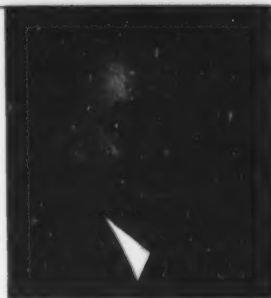
In the next pages, you will find a special section on the Alberta Disability Strategy, in addition to the section entitled Year in Review, in which we provide an overview of the work we achieved in relation to our business plan.

The Premier's Council acknowledges the challenges ahead and looks forward to pursuing and promoting the principles of full citizenship for persons with disabilities.

Sincerely,



Tom Fowler



In June 1996, Canada's First Ministers agreed to make disability issues a collective priority - this commitment was reaffirmed in December 1997. In response, the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Ministers responsible for social services developed the *In Unison* document which addressed general principles and values related to the vision of full inclusion of persons with disabilities.

In Unison was essentially a federal/provincial/territorial agreement to take action in four key areas:

- > the vision of full citizenship for persons with disabilities,
- > disability supports,
- > employment, and
- > income.

Objectives and policy directions were identified in each of the four areas. A "Federal Disability Strategy" is being created to more clearly define the policy, program and budget changes that will be required to address the objectives identified in *In Unison*.

The Province of Alberta has embarked on a process to develop its own Disability Strategy to complement and fulfil our province's commitment to the Federal Disability Strategy. The process will be coordinated by the Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities and will fully involve provincial government leaders and Alberta's disability community.

The development and implementation of the Alberta Disability Strategy will ensure that the issues and concerns of persons with disabilities will be acknowledged and acted on by government leaders until the goal of full citizenship is reached.

Consistent with the federal approach, we know that, in order to achieve full citizenship, we need to focus on the areas of employment, personal supports and financial supports. However, we also recognize the importance of education and learning as key components for reaching full citizenship, and have therefore incorporated this fourth pillar into the Alberta Disability Strategy.

The Four Pillars of Full Citizenship: The Premier's Council views the four areas of Employment, Financial Supports, Personal Supports and Education/Learning as fundamental. For Albertans with disabilities to achieve Full Citizenship, programs and services in these four areas must be scrutinized to ensure they foster independence. The Alberta Disability Strategy will include tools to complete this assessment. The Premier's Council will oversee and guide an Alberta Disability Strategy Coordinating Committee and sub-committees working within the four specific areas.



Endorsement

Goal: obtain official, public endorsement of Alberta Disability Strategy by Premier and Cabinet as an umbrella policy that all ministries and regional authorities must consider when developing business plans and policy

Develop Communications Plan
Goal: develop optimal approaches for keeping key partners and stakeholders informed

Implementation

Goal: finalize report of recommendations, determine responsibilities, timelines, resources and other practicalities of implementation, finalize implementation action plans

Finalize Targets

Goal: using previous and ongoing consultation with all stakeholders, determine exactly what we want the Alberta Disability Strategy to achieve—and how to achieve it

Develop Accountability Program

Goal: develop implementation process based on key performance measures which can be used to monitor each department's progress in improving the status of Albertans with disabilities

Establish Benchmarks

Goal: accurately assess how well Alberta is doing in the key areas of employment, education/learning, personal supports, financial supports and full citizenship; particular emphasis on specific issues identified by stakeholders as priorities.

Develop Strategy

Goal: using extensive consultation, develop specific strategies aimed at positive, tangible improvements in the five key focus areas; share strategy with all stakeholders and finalize based on feedback

Input from Other Jurisdictions

Goal: ensure the Alberta Disability Strategy is developed in concert with Federal Disability Strategy and other provinces; use other models for success from international community

Develop/Apply Disability Lens

Goal: using successful models being developed and already in place, develop and apply a comprehensive, yet easy-to-use "checklist" tool to screen and assess disability-specific and general policies, programs and services which may impact Albertans with disabilities

Inventory and Evaluation
Goal: analysis of legislation, regulations, policies, programs and services pertaining to disability issues and full citizenship

The Council is following a ten-step process (above) for developing and implementing the Alberta Disability Strategy. By year's end, work had already started on the first few steps. It's envisioned that 18 to 24 months will be required to conclude all ten steps. Progress will be reported in a timely fashion to all stakeholders.

The creation of the Alberta Disability Strategy requires full involvement and support from the disability community, provincial staff at the program and policy level, and the key Ministers who provide the programs and services that are most important to Albertans with disabilities.

Inherent in the Alberta Disability Strategy is a framework of accountability that will establish the benchmarks of the status of persons with disabilities in Alberta, assist in the monitoring and reporting on their changing status, and identify recommendations for improvements to current practices among government departments and service providers. The accountability framework is relevant only if government leaders understand and accept the information collected and recognize its value for all Albertans.

In fiscal year 2000 and beyond, developing and overseeing implementation of the Alberta Disability Strategy will form the brunt of the Council's work.

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In fiscal year 2000 and beyond, developing and overseeing implementation of the Alberta Disability Strategy will form the brunt of the Council's work.

The 1999 -2000 business plan of the Premier's Council identifies three core business areas: policy development, advocacy, and evaluation. Within these core business areas, the Premier's Council identified the following goals:

Goal 1 Bridge Building: develop strong partnerships, strategic alliances and working relationships in pursuit of our mission, to champion significant improvements in the status of persons with disabilities

Action Taken: During the 1999-2000 fiscal year, the Council met with a diversity of community stakeholders and government bodies including:

- > Alberta Aids to Daily Living Appeals Committee
- > Alberta Association for Community Living
- > Alberta Disability Forum
- > Alberta Mental Health Board
- > Barrier-Free Transportation Committee
- > Brain Injury Association of Alberta
- > Champions of Workplace Diversity Consortium
- > City of Edmonton Advisory Board
- > Employment Supports for Persons With Disabilities Committee
- > Human Resources and Employment: Labour Market Division
- > Minister's Employability Council
- > Provincial Persons with Developmental Disabilities Advisory Committee
- > Provincial Fetal Alcohol Advisory Committee
- > Steering Committee on the Impact of Aging

Outstanding Areas to be Addressed:

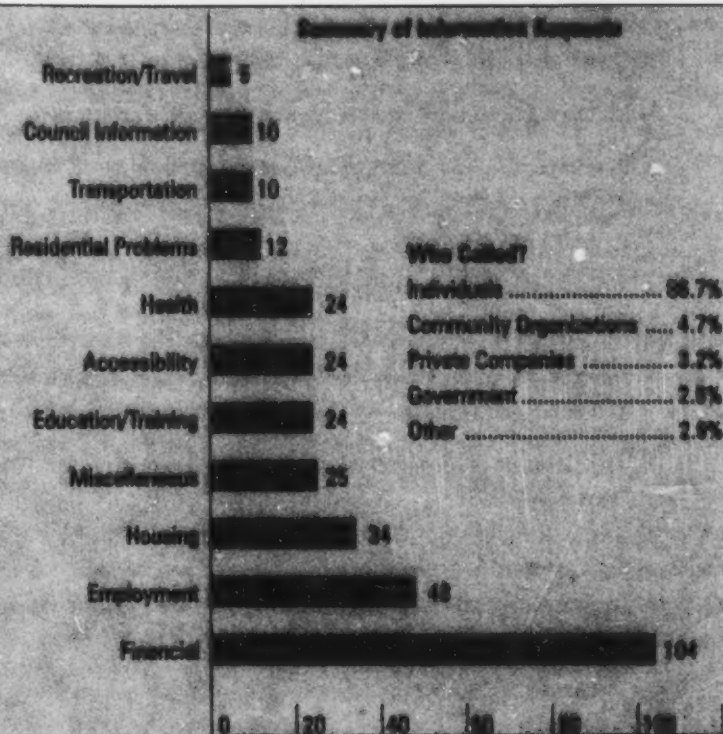
- (1) developing a partnership with the Alberta Disabilities Forum to effectively communicate the Council's role and to co-sponsor community consultations regarding the Council's strategic priorities
- (2) facilitating an annual forum/event that involves government, service providers and disability organizations in the exploration of current issues, solutions and coordinated responses
- (3) hosting informal community forums across Alberta to gain direct input from Albertans with disabilities

Goal 2 Image /Profile and Communications: build awareness of the Council and its work and to ensure those messages are consistent and have impact

Action Taken:

- (1) Council was presented with opportunities to participate in various public forums, including:
 - > 1999 Alberta: Prairie Conference on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome
 - > 2000 Government Conference: Government at the Dawn of a New Century
 - > Aboriginal Disability Focus Groups in Edmonton and High Prairie
 - > Building Strength in Our Community: Disabled Community Consultations
 - > Fourth Global Conference on Aging
 - > Future Scenarios: Continuing Care Service Needs in Alberta
 - > Neurotrauma Connections '99
 - > Primary Health Care Conference
 - > Vitalize Volunteer Conference 1999
- (2) Council developed a communications plan/strategy that guides internal and external communication regarding the Alberta Disability Strategy

Focus On Information: As part of its goal to raise its profile and awareness of disability issues in Alberta, the Council is committed to providing information to various stakeholders. This year, the Council continued to publish *Status Report*, its quarterly newsletter, and established a presence on the Internet. The Council also staffs a toll-free telephone number with a full-time information officer, who is available to answer disability-related queries from across Alberta, and make referrals as required. The graph shows a summary of the nature of requests for information.



Outstanding Areas to be Addressed:

- (1) identifying those representatives with an interest in Alberta's disability community (government, service providers, disability organizations, and community) who are not currently consulted by the Council and inviting them to participate in Council's activities

Goal 3 Regionalization: ensure that disability issues are fully addressed in the business plans of regional authorities

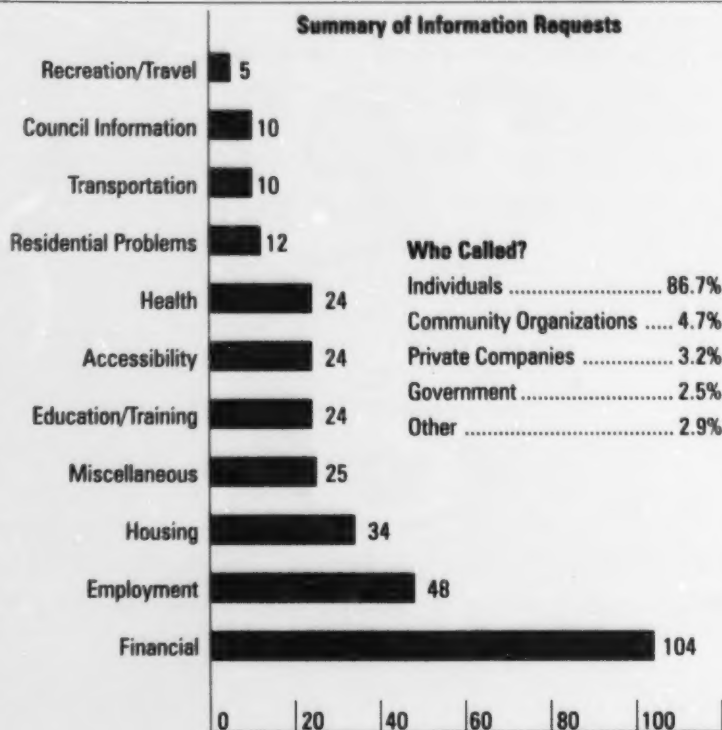
Action Taken: Council has made steps towards providing input into the business planning process of regional authorities by:

- > reviewing Regional Health Authority business plans
- > presenting information to the Regional Health Authority Council
- > providing representation on the Provincial Persons with Developmental Disabilities Advisory Committee

Outstanding Areas to be Addressed:

- (1) assisting all regional authorities with developing goals and strategies and allocating resources to address disability issues in their regions
- (2) assisting all regional authorities with taking significant steps in ensuring that portability, accessibility, and funding is available equitably to Albertans with disabilities
- (3) promoting the regional authorities to identify a liaison person for disability issues

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- (3) promoting the regional authorities to identify a liaison person for disability issues

Goal 4 Provincial Business Plans: ensure that provincial ministries understand and accept their role in improving the status of persons with disabilities

Action Taken: Council consulted with various government ministries regarding disability-related issues by

- > being involved in the business planning process for government ministries
- > establishing links with various senior officials to provide input regarding goals and strategic priorities respective to persons with disabilities
- > providing representation on the Health and Wellness Executive Committee

Outstanding Areas to be Addressed:

- (1) developing a mechanism/tool that evaluates the impact of provincial/departmental policies and programs on Albertans with disabilities
- (2) facilitating the development of a strategy for disability issues to be addressed in each of the regional authority business plans

Goal 5 Integration – Big Picture Policy: key provincial decision-makers will understand the needs of and issues facing Albertans with disabilities

Action Taken:

- (1) the Council provided input at various policy tables including:

- > Aboriginal Policy Framework
- > AISH Redesign Committee
- > Alberta Aids to Daily Living
- > Alberta Brain Injury Initiative
- > Barrier-Free Transportation Committee
- > Committee on Parking Policy For Persons With Disabilities
- > Employment Supports For Persons with Disabilities
- > Interdepartmental Committee on Alternative Communications
- > Long Term Care Review
- > Persons with Developmental Disabilities Consultations
- > Special Education Advisory Committee

- (2) the Council continues to develop an Alberta Disability Strategy that provides an overall umbrella policy to guide all provincial departments and agencies

Outstanding Areas to be Addressed:

- (1) having the developed Alberta Disability Strategy approved by Cabinet before 2001.

Rob Lougheed is the MLA for Clover Bar/Fort Saskatchewan. He has degrees in Education and Science and over 28 years of experience as an Alberta educator. In addition to his position as Chair and MLA, Rob currently serves as a member of the following committees: the Standing Policy Committee on Health & Safe Communities, the Capital Region Caucus, the Select Standing Committee on Public Accounts, the Farm Property Assessment Review Committee, and the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund Standing Committee.

Anne Belohorec of Sherwood Park is Chair of the Full Citizenship Committee and a member of the Education/Learning Committee. She is a registered nurse, and has extensive experience working with issues surrounding multiple sclerosis. She also speaks on health and wellness issues. This is Anne's second term with the Premier's Council.

Gordon Bullivant of Calgary is the Chair of the Education/Learning Committee. He recently completed his term of office as President of the Learning Disabilities Association of Canada. He is an active member of the Calgary Stakeholders Group for Learning Disabilities and has represented the Premier's Council on the Advisory Committee for Alberta Learning's review of Special Education. Gordon is the Executive Director of the Foothills Academy, a centre for children with learning disabilities, and has been active in the special needs community for over 30 years.

Shirley Dupmeier of Medicine Hat has been re-appointed to the Premier's Council for a second term. She is currently a member of the Financial Supports Committee and the Personal Supports Committee. She has extensive experience working with issues surrounding visual impairment and other disabilities, and is a liaison with many disability organizations in Medicine Hat.

Andrea Fugeman Millar of Millarville is a member of the Full Citizenship and Education/Learning Committees. She is a presiding Justice of the Peace within the Criminal Justice System, the Director of the Provincial Learning Disabilities Association, and a national legal advisor for the Canadian Learning Disabilities Association. She is a former Co-Chair of Windsong Child and Family Services, a position she held for four years.

Gerald Gordey of Vegreville is Chair of the Financial Supports Committee. He has a long history of community involvement and has contributed to many disability organizations as an advisor and volunteer. Gordon has been a County Councillor, school board Chair, representative of the Vegreville Health Unit board, and advisory member of a voluntary hospital board. He has served on the Board of Directors for Edmonton Social Services for the Disabled, Alberta Rehabilitation Council for the Disabled, and Alberta Special Olympics. He is also the former Chair of VALID (Vegreville Association for Living in Dignity), a volunteer organization responsible for providing services to persons with disabilities in the Vegreville Region.

Judy Hellevang of Calgary is a member of the Full Citizenship Committee and the Education/Learning Committee. As a volunteer, Judy has been associated with the Developmental Disabilities Resource Centre of Calgary (DDRC) for 18 years. She sits on an Advisory Committee to the DDRC's Board of Directors, made up of people with developmental disabilities. Judy has been an advocate for many people with disabilities, and continues to promote their rights.

Jim Killick of St. Albert is Chair of the Coordinating Committee for the Alberta Disability Strategy, as well as Chair of the Personal Supports Committee and member of the Employment Supports Committee. Jim has been actively involved in the field of community rehabilitation in Alberta for approximately 20 years in the areas of counselling, program development, and administration. Until recently, he was the Executive Director of the Easter Seal Ability Council, and has been involved as a participant in numerous community volunteer associations.

Carrielynn Lamouche of Gift Lake is a member of the Coordinating Committee for the development of the Alberta Disability Strategy. She is a member of the Gift Lake Metis Settlement and has worked for a number of years with the Metis Settlement's General Council and with the provincial and federal governments in the area of social programming. Carrielynn has organized the first Elder and Youth Conferences for the eight settlements and currently sits on a number of provincial and national boards that deal with disability and healing.

Margaret MacCabe of Edmonton is the Chair of the Employment Committee, and sits on the Personal Supports Committee. Margaret is currently conducting thesis research for a Masters of Science in the Health Promotion program at the University of Alberta. She is studying the impact of acquired disability and rehabilitation services on the sexual health of women with spinal cord injuries. She is also actively involved in therapeutic recreation programs and health promotion for persons with disabilities.

Sandra Newhouse of Calgary sits on the Full Citizenship and Education/Learning Committees. She is an active member in the Children's Hospital Aid Society. She has been involved as a volunteer member of many organizations in Alberta, including the Alberta Children's Health Foundation, Women in Need Society, Grace Hospital Foundation, and the Alberta Rehabilitation Council for the Disabled.

Pat Pardo of Calgary is a member of the Education/Learning and Employment Committees. She has received her PhD in Educational Psychology with a specialization in disability and multicultural organizational change. She is currently the Coordinator of the Disability Resource Centre and an adjunct professor with the Community Rehabilitation Disability Studies Program and the Master of Teaching Program at the University of Calgary. She sits on numerous boards, including the Canadian Association of Independent Living Centres.

Ruth Peterson of Edmonton sits on the Personal Supports Committee. Ruth was a registered nurse who helped establish the first Cerebral Palsy Association of Alberta in the 1950s, and was a past president of the Easter Seals Ability Fund. She served as a board member of the Saskatchewan Council for the Disabled, as well as the Canadian Council of Rehabilitation and Work. Recently, she has represented the Premier's Council at the Healthy Aging Symposium, Neurotrauma Conference, and a meeting of the Human Rights Commission.

Lionel Remillard of Bonnyville is a member of the Employment and Financial Supports Committees. He has had a long career as an educator and has extensive experience working with persons with disabilities. He was the former Director of the Smoky River District Association for the Mentally Handicapped and former President of the Alberta Association for the Mentally Handicapped, and has served as a volunteer with several other community organizations.

George Schmidt of High Level is a member of the Employment Committee. He has served in many community service positions, including Councillor of the Town of High Level, and has held senior management positions in various health care organizations.



Council Members, back row, left to right: George Schmidt, Lionel Remillard, Judy Hellevang, Patricia Pardo, Premier Ralph Klein, Anne Belohorec, Sandra Newhouse, Andrea Fugeman Millar, Gordon Bullivant and Gerald Gordey. Front row, left to right: Carrielynn Lamouche, Rob Loughheed (Chair), Jim Killick, Margaret MacCabe, Ruth Peterson, and Shirley Dupmeier (with Willie).

Elaine Chapelle is the Executive Director. Prior to joining the Council Secretariat, she worked as a senior manager at the Special Education Branch of Alberta Education. She also has experience as an educator in settings ranging from elementary to post-secondary levels.

Tom Fowler is the Manager of Community Relations and Policy Analysis. His professional experience ranges from front line social work to Provincial Director for the Canadian Mental Health Association in Newfoundland. As a private consultant, he has also been involved in developing educational and training programs for chronically unemployed persons.

Bryan Sandilands is the Coordinator of Research and Evaluation. After earning his Bachelor of Science with Specialization in Psychology, Bryan worked with the Canadian Mental Health Association, the Boyle Street Co-op, and the Alberta Mental Health Board (formerly PMHAB) on the Independent Living Skills Collaborative Project. This experience led Bryan back to school where he graduated from the Faculty of Social Work at the University of Calgary.

Sherri Tanchak is the Coordinator of Research and Policy Analysis. She has a Bachelor of Arts, a Bachelor of Social Work, and is currently completing her Master's of Social Work thesis. Sherri has employment experience in the areas of child welfare, income support, community development, social science research, youth advocacy, and education advising and support for post-secondary students with disabilities. She looks forward to applying her research skills to the development of an Alberta Disability Strategy.

Carmen Grandmont is the Administrative Assistant. She takes care of the Council's accounting and budgeting, and provides all senior administration support to the Council and Secretariat.

Cheryl Koss is the Receptionist. She covers reception, provides information and advice to callers/visitors, manages mail and our resource library, as well as a host of other jobs.

1999 - 2000 financial statement

April 1, 1999 - March 31, 2000

Object of Expenditure	Authorized	Expended	Unexpended
Manpower			
Salaries - Permanent Positions	\$ 251,000	\$ 66,895	\$ 184,105
Salaries - Non-permanent Positions	0	5,544	(5,544)
Wages	0	32,759	(32,759)
Payments to Contract Employees	0	131,627	(131,627)
Employer Contributions	43,000	22,734	20,266
Allowances and Benefits	1,000	3,696	(2,696)
Total manpower	\$ 295,000	\$ 263,255	\$ 31,745
Supplies and Services			
Travel Expenses	\$ 91,000	\$ 20,718	\$ 70,282
Advertising	3,000	15,186	(12,186)
Freight and Postage	16,700	9,430	7,270
Equipment Rental	4,700	6,932	(2,232)
Telephone and Communications	9,500	5,540	3,960
Repairs and Maintenance	800	120	680
Contract Services	218,000	209,132	8,868
Data Processing Services	0	(93)	(93)
Hosting	3,000	(11,104)	(8,104)
Other Purchased Services	0	0	0
Materials and Supplies	12,300	27,202	(14,902)
Grants - Other	0	40,000	(40,000)
Payments to MLAs	15,000	15,156	(156)
Total Supplies and Services	\$ 374,000	\$ 360,612	\$ 13,388
Total Expenditures 1999/2000	\$ 669,000	\$ 623,867	\$ 45,133